

SEP 30 2015

Before the Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

In the Matter of Lifeline and Link Up)
Reform and Modernization, Telecommunications) WC Docket No. 11-42, 09-197, 10-90
Carriers Eligible for Universal Service Support)

**COMMENTS BY LIBRARIES
RELATED TO THE LIFELINE AND LINK UP REFORM
NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING (NPRM)**

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of millions of Library patrons across the country we applaud the Federal Communications Commission's Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) on the vital Lifeline universal service program.

For more than 150 years, our libraries have served as a crucial resource for Americans looking to advance their education, access community resources and engage in our democracy. Over the past 20 years libraries have expanded this service to include access to computers, Internet access and now high-speed broadband and Wi-Fi.

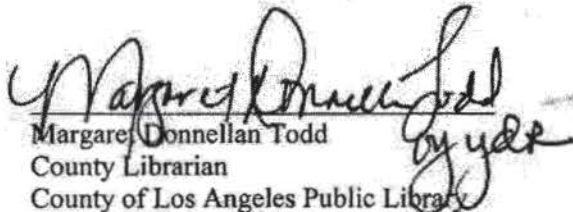
Libraries have also been at the forefront of digital inclusion efforts for many years. We provide not only free and open Internet access but also training and guidance to support meaningful broadband use in our communities. The FCC's E-Rate program continues to play a fundamental role in establishing libraries as bulwarks of digital access in our neighborhoods. The increased funding for E-Rate will ensure that libraries continue to provide these essential resources and offer free Internet access into the future.

Unfortunately as the Internet becomes more critical as a tool for learning, communicating, creating and accessing information and services, the gaps in access across our communities are growing. Libraries help close these gaps, but more must be done to increase access for the 30% of Americans who lack home broadband. Furthermore, as libraries make more of their resources available online, lack of home broadband access threatens to leave some Americans in the digital dark.

The Lifeline program provides support to low-income individuals to ensure they remain connected to their community. Lifeline began by supporting access to landline phones but as technology changed, the program evolved. The FCC recognized this by including wireless phones as an allowable use nearly a decade ago.

We support expanding the Lifeline program to include broadband Internet as an allowable use. Helping ensure all Americans are able to access affordable, quality broadband is critical to equal opportunity in our modern digital era.

Sincerely,


Margaret Donnellan Todd
County Librarian
County of Los Angeles Public Library